

Title of the invention
Lock for a hand stamping device

Cross-reference to related applications
Not applicable

Background of the Invention

Field of the invention: The present invention relates to a lock apparatus to control operation of a hand stamping device, and, more particularly, to such a lock apparatus embodying a construction excess to a stamp platen and preferably of a movement of a stamped platen to an operative position at a window opening for the platen in the hand stamping device.

Description of the prior art: U S patent numbers 4,432,281 and 4,735,143 disclose the construction of two different stamping devices useful to apply ink impressions to a document. The platen bearing the indica to be imprinted is normally freely assessable to anyone having access to the stamping device. Thus, a platen a bearing notarial certification or bearing a resemblance of a signature of an individual are two examples of a need to prevent unauthorized use of a stamping device even in those instances where the stamping device becomes accessible. Sometimes the only deterrent to unauthorized use is the storage of a stamping device at a location that is only out of sight to the general public. However it may be insufficient to store the stamping device in a desk drawer or the like that is normally protected by a lock against unauthorized access to the contents of the drawer. The consequence of unauthorized use of the stamping device may be extreme and remain undetected or even wrongly assume to be authorized. Sometimes a ledger may be maintained to list all authorized usage which is useful only if there were a suspected fraudulent use of a stamping device. A need therefore exist for an

apparatus to prevent the use of the stamping device independently use of the environment in which the stamping device resides.

Accordingly, it is an object of the present invention to provide an apparatus to prevent unauthorized use of a hand stamping device by preventing access to proprietary indica
5 provided on a platen irrespective to an ink medium.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a lock apparatus easily installed and removed from a hand stamping device and without wear and tear to the hand stamping device.

Summary of the Invention

10 According to the present invention there is provided a lock apparatus for a hand stamping device having an actuator frame slidable relative to a base frame to present a stamp platen residing in a frame cavity to a window in the base frame, the lock apparatus including the combination of locking heads having upstanding anchor walls protruding from a back wall such that the anchor walls of one locking head receive such an actuator frame and the anchor walls of
15 the other locking head extend in such a frame cavity to prevent access to such a stamp platen, struts for connecting the locking heads in a space apart relation with the anchor walls extending toward each other for receiving such a hand stamping device there between and a lock for interlocking the locking heads in a spaced apart relation between the struts.

Brief description of the several views of the drawings

20 The present invention will be more fully understood when the following description is read in light of the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 is a front elevational view of a typical hand stamping device as well known in the art;

Figure 2 is a side elevational view of the device shown in Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a bottom view of the device shown in Figure 1;

Figure 4 is a front elevational view of the preferred embodiment of lock apparatus for the typical hand stamping device shown in Figure 1;

Figure 5 is a right side elevational view taken along lines V-V of Figure 4;

Figure 6 is a front elevational view of one locking head forming part of the preferred embodiment of lock apparatus;

Figure 7 is a right side elevational view taken along lines VII-VII of Figure 6;

Figure 8 is a plane view taken along lines VIII-VIII of Figure 6;

Figure 9 is a front elevational view of a second locking head combined with struts forming part of the preferred embodiment of lock apparatus;

Figure 10 is a right side elevational view taken along lines X-X of Figure 9;

Figure 11 is a left side elevational view taken along lines XI-XI of Figure 9;

Figure 12 is a front elevational view illustrating the assembly typical hand stamping device shown in Figure 1 in the preferred embodiment of lock apparatus; and

Figure 13 is a right side elevational view taken along lines XIII-XIII of Figure 12.

Detailed description of the invention

The hand stamping device 10 as shown in Figures 1, 2 and 3 of the drawings is typical of stamping devices per se well known in the art and suitable for use with the locking apparatus of the present invention. The hand stamping device 10 comprises a hollow base frame

11 with side walls 12 and 14 joined with end walls 16 and 18 terminating at an open rectangular lower end face 20 to bear against a supporting surface containing a document to receive a stamped impression thereon. The walls 12, 14, 16 and 18 at the end face 20 form boundaries to a window of a frame cavity 22 in which a stamp platen 24 can be displaced from an inking position in a confronting relation with an inking pad in the upper part of the frame 11 to a stamping position lying in the window at the end face 20. Cam followers moveable along cam tracks 26 operate to invert the stamp platen during the course of travel between the inking position and the stamping position. An upper actuator frame 28 is formed by side walls 30 and 32 joined with end walls 34 and 36 forming an internal cavity closed by a top wall 38. The internal cavity of the upper actuator frame 28 fits with and is displaced along the base frame member 11 for providing the driving force to move the cam followers along the cam tracks 26 for moving and inverting the stamp platen. Springs, not shown, normally hold the actuator frame in a displaced position from which an operator can move the actuator frame 28 along the base frame member 11 to the stamping position.

A lock apparatus 50 embodies the features according to the preferred embodiment of the present invention is shown in Figures 4 and 5 for securing the hand stamping device 10 that is only typical of hand stamping devices which the present invention is useful to prevent an unauthorized stamping operation. The lock apparatus includes two locking heads 52 and 54 constructed to established a ridged interconnection with the base frame 11 and the upper actuator frame 28, respectfully. The locking heads 52 and 54 are releasably interconnected by parallel spaced apart struts 56 and 58 used to connect the locking heads in a space apart relation for receiving the hand stamping device 10 between the struts whereby the locking heads and

struts encircle the outer periphery of the hand stamping device 10. A lock 60 interlocks the locking heads in a spaced apart relation between the struts. The lock 60 is shown with a cooperating key, but the present invention is useful with any per say well-known forms of a lock device.

5 The details of the construction of the locking head 52 are shown in figures 6, 7, and 8 and are particularly characterized by upstanding and generally parallel anchor walls 62 and 64 protruding from an elongated back wall 66. A leg hinge lug 68 and a tab 70 containing an aperture 72 are provided outwardly beyond the opposite ends of the elongated back wall 66. The details of the construction of the locking head 54 and the struts 56 and 58 are shown in figures 9, 10, and 11. Upstanding anchor walls 74 and 76 extend toward each other at acute angles from an elongated back wall 78. In the preferred embodiment, the struts 56 and 58 are integral with the back wall 78 and are formed as perpendicular extensions extending in generally a parallel relation from the opposite ends of the back wall 78. The extended terminal end of the strut 56 is formed with a slot 80 for receiving the leg hinge lug 68 and thereby formed a hinge interconnection between the strut 58 and locking head 52. A hinged interconnection can, if desired, be accomplished by a conventional hinge utilizing a hinge pin. Other forms of releasably interconnecting tab and slot connectors carried by one of the locking heads and one of the struts can be used without departing from the present invention. The extended terminal end of the strut 58 is dimensioned to freely pass through the aperture 72 and the end portion projecting there beyond is formed with an annular aperture 82 for receiving a lock bar 60A of the lock 60. Other forms of releasably interconnecting tab and slot connectors carried by one of the locking heads and one of the struts for receiving the lock can be used. The back wall 78 of the locking

head 54 is defined by a length and width substantially corresponding to length and width of the window in the base frame. The anchor walls 74 and 76 are dimensioned and arranged to extend into the frame cavity 22 and into a closely spaced and confronting relation with the platen 24 to prevent advancing movement of the stamp platen toward the window of the frame cavity and thereby also prevent useful access to the stamp platen.

Figures 4, 5, 12 and 13 illustrate the assembling of the hand stamping device10 in the lock apparatus of the present invention. As shown in Figures 12 and 13 the leg hinge lug 68 has been assembled in the slot 80 and the back wall 66 positioned to extend parallel with strut 58. The hand stamping device10 is introduced between the parallel anchor walls 62 and 64 and advanced between the struts 56 and 58 to a seated position shown in Figures 4 and 5 in which the end face 20 abuts the back wall 78 of a locking head 54 and the anchor walls 74 and 76 extend into the frame cavity 22 and prevent advancing movement of the platen in the frame cavity 22. There after the locking head 52 is rotated about the hinged connection formed by the engagement of the lug 68 in the slot 80. The parallel anchor walls 62 and 64 pass along opposite sides of the actuator frame 28 thus entrapping the actuator frame when the aperture 82 in the end portion of strut 56 passes through the aperture 72 sufficiently allows the installation of the lock bar 60A of the lock 60 in the aperture 82.

While the present invention has been described in connection with the preferred embodiments of the various figures, it is to be understood that other similar embodiments may be used or modifications and additions may be made to the described embodiment for performing the same function of the present invention without deviating therefrom. Therefore, the present

invention should not be limited to any single embodiment, but rather construed in breadth and scope in accordance with the recitation of the appended claims.